



## Table of Contents

Challenges and Opportunities.....	1
Professional Learning Opportunities.....	2
MLA SLD Summer Retreat.....	3
2016 MBI to Feature Kevin Honeycutt! .....	3
EdReady Montana .....	4
Connect With Your Professional Organizations .....	4
Contact Information .....	4

## Challenges and Opportunities

Greetings Friends,

As you begin a summer of recovery, relaxation, and learning I would like to share additional information about big changes on the horizon for school libraries in the 2016-17 school year.

On May 25th, the MSL Commission made the difficult choice to eliminate funding of the statewide database contract. Under the current contract, access to the Ebsco databases will continue until August 31, 2016.

On May 16, the Montana State Library (MSL) was informed by the Governor's Office of Budget and Program Planning that the [Coal Severance Tax](#) (CST) Shared Account continues to face dramatic revenue declines over previous revenue estimates; as a result, MSL was informed of the need to further reduce CST expenditures this biennium by an additional \$166,000. This \$166,000 reduction is in addition to the \$46,000 reduction MSL was notified of in January 2016. In total, MSL's \$943,458 biennial CST appropriation has now been reduced by \$212,591. The cut represents a 45% reduction to the FY 17 appropriation and a 23% reduction to the total biennial appropriation that had already been reduced by more than \$90,000 from the previous biennium.

As was previously announced, the Commission voted at their April meeting to significantly reduce the funding of the statewide databases. In the face of the most recent round of cuts, regardless of usage or where these resources fit within the [Library Development Study Task Force recommendations](#), MSL no longer has the financial resources necessary to sustain the current statewide contract model. Materials from the Commission meetings are available [online](#).

Please be reassured that efforts are underway to figure out how other funding sources or solutions can be found. To that end, Cara Orban, Statewide Projects Librarian at the State Library sent this message via the Wired and School Library listservs on May 26:

Dear librarians,

You will have read yesterday's letter from our State Librarian, Jennie Stapp, and our State Library Commission Chair, Colet Bartow, regarding the immense reduction in state Coal

Severance Tax funding and the Commission's subsequent decision to meet that reduction by eliminating funding for the EBSCO statewide database contract, which expires August 31.

At this time we are gauging interest and available financial support in sustaining access to certain resources in the current statewide suite. If you are interested in preserving access to a particular database from the statewide suite and you have some level of funds to commit to an ongoing subscription that would begin September 1, please contact me directly ([corban@mt.gov](mailto:corban@mt.gov)) **by no later than Wednesday, June 8** so that we can assess our options and learn more about group pricing.

Comments or questions regarding Coal Severance Tax or yesterday's Commission meeting should continue to be directed to [Jennie](#).

Cara Orban, Statewide Projects Librarian | [Montana State Library](#) | [corban@mt.gov](mailto:corban@mt.gov) | 406.444.5350

Montana's library community is strong and committed to supporting all library types through resource sharing and a collaborative problem-solving spirit. While this funding reduction is testing us all, I know that our community is resilient and will rise to the occasion!

In light of this serious news, I am particularly thankful for what I learned at the School Library Advocacy Workshop that Ann Ewbank (MSU-Bozeman) coordinated on April 30. According to the American Association of School Librarians, [advocacy](#) is

*On-going process of building partnerships so that others will act for and with you, turning passive support into educated action ...*

Each of us has an opportunity to take inventory, set our eyes forward, and meet our challenges head on. I will do my best to provide you with the information you need to actively advocate for school library programs and resources.

As always, please take some time to reflect on the role you can play as an instructional and professional leader in your school, district, and region. Each teacher-librarian has the potential to provide solutions to the challenges that our schools face in delivering on our promise to provide a high-quality public education. Be courageous in thinking about collaborative ways to accomplish the traditional work of a school librarian and embrace the opportunity to strategically impact student learning through partnerships with other teachers, public and academic libraries, community organizations, students, and parents. Together, we can ensure that: *the role of libraries in a democratic society is to embrace the social responsibility of learning.*

*Carla*

## Professional Learning Opportunities

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**Teacher Learning Hub**  
Office of Public Instruction

**Did You Know?** You can earn five renewal units by taking a Teacher-Librarian Digital Blast course on the [OPI Teacher Learning Hub](#). The 2014-15 series and the 2015-16 series are available now. Both are self-paced—you can complete them on your own schedule in the comfort of your own office or home! To

earn renewal credits you must complete all activities (reading, video, assignment, etc.) within the course, including the course evaluation at the end.

All courses on the Teacher Learning Hub are free! All courses include renewal units upon completion. For information on the courses or enrollment, visit the Learning Hub or contact Jessica Bryant ([jbryant3@mt.gov](mailto:jbryant3@mt.gov))

## MLA SLD Summer Retreat



**Montana Library Association**

*Montana's Libraries from the Mountains to Plains*

The MLA School Library Division is holding a Summer Retreat at MSU-Billings on August 5. Download the registration form [HERE](#).

### Tentative Schedule

- 9:30-10:00 Breakfast and welcome, schedule overview/housekeeping
- 10:00-11:00 Makerspace Elizabeth Waddington (possibly over at L&C)
- 11:00-12:30 Lunch - Jennie Stapp, State Librarian: State Resources, School Library involvement, Q&A
- Colet Bartow, OPI
- 12:30-1:30 Book Repair MSUB
- 1:30-2:30 Divisional Round Table: fundraising, advocacy, book fairs
- 2:30-3:30 Share your best (book, lesson, resource, program) and Wrap Up
- 4:00-5:00 Optional tour of BPL

Registration fee Includes snacks and materials. Lunch is being provided by the MSUB Library. OPI credits will be available, 6 hrs. This has also been approved for MEA/MFT Trade Hours (check with individual districts.)

- MLA Members Early Registration by July 11, 2015: \$15
- MLA Members Registration after July 11, 2015: \$25
- Non-members: \$50 (join the School Library Division of MLA for \$40.00 and save!)
- MLA-School Library Division membership: \$40

Mail the completed [form](#) with a check payable to Montana Library Association to:

Debbi Kramer  
Montana Library Association  
33 Beartooth View Dr.  
Laurel, MT 59044

For questions, contact [Lynde Roberts](#) or [Niki Keuch](#), co-chairs MLA SLD.

## 2016 MBI to Feature Kevin Honeycutt!

Teacher and global presenter [Kevin Honeycutt](#) has been added to this year's MBI lineup June 20-24 for Monday's keynote ([Everyone Matters](#)) and breakout sessions on [digital citizenship/online safety](#) and [tech tools](#).



Kevin is a technology integrationist, staff developer, and Apple distinguished educator who taught K-12 art for 13 years. He now travels the globe presenting about his passions in education - combatting all types of bullying,



creating innovative and engaging curriculum, meeting the needs of at-risk learners, and re-engaging the "lost" learner. His "tradigital" approach to education combined with his personal life experience, sense of humor, and creativity shine through his work - you won't want to miss Kevin at MBI!

Find all info for MBI including registration and other sessions [here](#).

## EdReady Montana

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EdReady Montana is a program for all students and individuals in Montana from middle school through adult basic education who want to prepare for upcoming local math classes or curriculum as well as supplement skills while taking a math class, prepare for the high school equivalency, or prepare for college. EdReady Montana helps individuals, students, and teachers revisit possible gaps in general math skills and helps students become better prepared for college math or for a desired career path. EdReady Montana will also help students study and review math concepts for a standardized exams. EdReady Montana is an online math resource FREE to Montana educators, students, and individuals thanks to a generous gift from the Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation. For a look at what EdReady Montana can do for you, or for others needing help in math, go to [edreadymontana.org](http://edreadymontana.org).



For a compelling look at what EdReady has done for Montana students, watch this short [EdReady Montana High School Case Study video](#)! (3:49)

Virg Hale | Region IV Ambassador | [virg.hale@montanadigitalacademy.org](mailto:virg.hale@montanadigitalacademy.org)

## Connect With Your Professional Organizations

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- Montana Library Association <http://mtlib.org>
- Montana Council for Computers and Technology in Education <http://www.mcceonline.org/>

## Contact Information

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Colet Bartow | [cbartow@mt.gov](mailto:cbartow@mt.gov) | 406-444-3583 | [Montana Teacher-Librarian Google site](#)